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DEPARTMENT OF CHEMISTRY  
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN  
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TECHNICAL REPORT V

THE PREPARATION AND PROPERTIES OF ZIRCONIUM AND  
HAFNIUM CHELATES OF CERTAIN  $\beta$  DIKETONES

by

Edwin M. Larsen, Glenn Terry and James Leddy

August 3, 1953

Based on research carried out under Task Order 4 of Contract  
N7onr - 28504 between the Office of Naval Research and the  
University of Wisconsin.

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The Preparation and Properties of Zirconium and  
Hafnium Chelates of Certain  $\beta$ -Diketones<sup>1</sup>

Edwin M. Larsen, Glenn Terry, James Leddy

Abstract

Compounds of zirconium and hafnium with the composition  $MK_4$  have been prepared with the following diketones: acetylacetone, trifluoroacetylacetone, 2-furoylacetone, 2-furoyltrifluoroacetone, 2-thenoylacetone, 2-thenoyltrifluoroacetone, and 2-pyrrolyltrifluoroacetone. The densities of the chelate compounds were determined by the standard pycnometric method using water or petroleum ether saturated with the chelate as the immersion liquid. The molecular volumes calculated, in all cases, were greater for the hafnium compound than the zirconium compound except for acetylacetone and 2-pyrrolyltrifluoroacetone derivatives where the molecular volumes were almost identical. The ultraviolet absorption spectra for the non-fluorine containing chelate compounds in cyclohexane are similar to the parent diketones. For the metal derivatives of the fluorinated diketones, the  $\lambda_{\max}$  associated with the enol ring is shifted to longer wave lengths, as compared to the  $\lambda_{\max}$  of the free diketone. The  $\lambda_{\max}$  for the zirconium chelates shifted to slightly longer wave lengths than for the corresponding hafnium compound.

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1. Based on a thesis submitted by Glenn Terry in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy and carried out under Task Order 4 of Contract N7onr-28504 between the Office of Naval Research and the University of Wisconsin. Presented in part at the September 15, 1952 Atlantic City Meeting of the American Chemical Society before the Physical and Inorganic Division.

Although certain diketones have been used for the fractional separation<sup>2</sup> of zirconium and hafnium, little is known about the properties of the solid metal chelates themselves. It was of interest therefore to isolate some of the solid products and examine their properties. Chelates of the following diketones were prepared: acetylacetone (HCCA), trifluoroacetylacetone (HCTA), 2-furoylacetone (HFCA), 2-furoyltrifluoroacetone (HFTA), 2-pyrrolyltrifluoroacetone (HPTA), 2-thenoylacetone (HTCA), 2-thenoyltrifluoroacetone (HTTA). Attempts to synthesize 2-pyrrolylacetone were unsuccessful.

Densities, Molecular Volumes.— One of the properties studied was the molecular volume of the solid chelate, since it has been suggested<sup>3</sup> that molecular volume data may shed some light on the metal ligand bonding in the chelate. However, in considering these data it must also be kept in mind that, as shown by Parry<sup>4</sup>, these data will be misleading if the compounds do not have the same crystal structure. Although no detailed determinations of crystal structure have been made, powder patterns have been run on all the compounds concerned here. The products are all crystalline, and the patterns indicate that the structures are all similar.

Hevesy<sup>5</sup> has shown that the molecular volumes of the zirconium and hafnium acetylacetone derivatives were essentially identical. Our density data for these derivatives, from which the molecular volumes (Table I) were calculated, agree very well with Hevesy's, 1.415 for the zirconium compound, and 1.67 for

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2. E. M. Larsen and G. Terry, J. Am. Chem. Soc. 75, 1560 (1953).
  3. W. Biltz, Z. Anorg. Chem. 164, 245 (1927).
  4. R. W. Parry, Chem. Revs. 46, 507 (1950).
  5. G. von Hevesy and M. Logstrup, Ber. 59B, 1890 (1926).

the hafnium compound. The similarity in molecular volumes and consequent similarity in zirconium and hafnium radii, are consistent with the ionic radii quoted: namely for  $Zr^{4+}$ , 0.74 Å, and  $Hf^{4+}$  0.75 Å.<sup>6</sup> However, it is only in the cases of acetylacetone and 2-pyrrolyltrifluoroacetone derivatives that we obtained almost identical molecular volumes. In all other cases, the molecular volume for the hafnium compound was greater than that of the zirconium compound for a given diketone. This would seem to indicate that the hafnium had an effectively larger radius than the zirconium under these conditions. Perhaps these data could better be explained using the covalent radii rather than the ionic radii. Unfortunately there are no such data available for the elements with coordination number eight, except for the elements in the metallic state. In this instance the zirconium radius is given as 1.54 Å and the hafnium radius<sup>7</sup> as 1.57 Å. The question next arises, will a difference of 0.03 Å in radii account for the observed differences in molecular volumes? To check this, differences in the effective zirconium and hafnium radii,  $\Delta R$ , in a given chelate, were calculated from the molecular volumes. To do this, the molecular volume was divided by Avogadro's number to obtain the effective volume of a single molecule, and then the radius calculated on the assumption that the molecule was spherical. These radii (Table I) are of the same order of magnitude as the radii arrived at using Fischer-Taylor-Hirschfelder models. These differences in effective radii represent differences in the zirconium-hafnium radii as long as it can be assumed that the rest of the chelate molecule has retained its dimensions. To test this assumption one can calculate

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6. W. Zacharieson, MDDC 1151, June 11, 1947.

7. L. Pauling, "Nature of the Chemical Bond", Cornell University Press, 2nd Ed., Ithaca, N. Y., p. 410, 1948.

the  $4(\text{CF}_3\text{-CH}_3)$  volume differences in these compounds by subtracting the molecular volume of the non-fluorinated species from the molecular volume of the corresponding fluorinated derivative. For the zirconium and hafnium derivatives of HFCA, HFTA, HTCA, and HTTA, the differences were quite constant, being 74, 74, 75, and 76 respectively. For HCCA and HCTA however, the  $4(\text{CF}_3\text{-CH}_3)$  differences for the zirconium and hafnium derivatives were 63, and 84 respectively. This results from the fact that the molecular volumes of the metal derivatives of HCCA are almost identical, while the molecular volumes of the derivatives of the HCTA are different for zirconium and hafnium. Thus, in this case a constant difference would not be expected. The constancy of the  $4(\text{CF}_3\text{-CH}_3)$  volume difference lends support to the conclusion that in these molecules the effective hafnium radius is on the average, 0.05 Å larger than the effective zirconium radius. This difference is not compatible with the small difference in the ionic radii, but is more comparable to the difference of 0.03 Å in the metallic covalent radii.

TABLE I

Chelate	Density(g./cc)*		Mol. Vol. cc		Molecular Radii Å		$\Delta R$ (Hf-Zr)
	Zr	Hf	Zr	Hf	Zr	Hf	
HCCA	1.416	1.691	344	340	5.15	5.13	-0.02
HCTA	1.729	1.863	407	424	5.43	5.52	0.09
HFCA	1.506	1.659	462	473	5.68	5.72	0.04
HFTA	1.701	1.826	536	547	5.97	6.01	0.04
HPTA	1.548	1.703	585	584	6.15	6.14	-0.01
HTCA	1.513	1.639	502	517	5.84	5.90	0.06
HTTA	1.693	1.793	577	593	6.11	6.17	0.06

\*Average values of at least four separate determinations.  
Average deviation  $\pm 0.005$ .



Melting points.- The fact that the presence of the trifluoro group in the diketone has a greater effect on the properties of the metal derivatives of acetyl trifluoroacetone than on the derivatives of diketones containing a heterocyclic group, is shown by the melting points. (Table III). Whereas the metal derivatives of HCCA have melting points in the region of  $190^{\circ}$ , the derivatives of HCTA have melting points near  $128^{\circ}$ . In no other case is the difference as large. The hafnium compounds in general all melt at lower temperatures than the zirconium compounds except in the case of the HPTA and HFCA derivatives, for which the melting points are about the same. The HPTA derivatives always showed a definite shrinkage at  $165^{\circ}$ , but did not actually melt until about  $185^{\circ}$ .

Ultraviolet spectra of the diketones.- Another property studied was the ultraviolet absorption spectra of solutions of the chelate compounds in benzene and cyclohexane. The spectra for these compounds in benzene have essentially the same general shape but all the  $\lambda_{\max}$  values are shifted to longer wave lengths, and an intensification of the  $\epsilon_{\max}$  is noted in the case of the fluoryl derivative. The absorption spectra of acetylacetone had been studied as early as 1904.<sup>8</sup> In terms of the present day theories, the single absorption maximum can be related to the enol form of the molecule with the acid hydrogen completing a six membered ring by means of a hydrogen bond. The enol ring is stabilized both by the hydrogen bond formation and the enol resonance.<sup>9</sup> The keto form can be ignored for it is known that the enol form of the diketones predominates in the solvents used. For instance, acetylacetone in benzene is at least 85% enol<sup>10</sup>, and trifluoroacetylacetone and 2-thenoyltrifluoroacetone are 97 and

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8. E. C. Baly and C. H. Desch, Trans. Chem. Soc. 85, 189 (1904).

9. I. N. Ferguson, "Electronic Structures of Organic Molecules", Prentice-Hall, New York, N. Y., 1952, p. 217-218.

10. R. H. Meyer, Ber. 47, 826 (1914).

94.5%<sup>11</sup> enol respectively in dry benzene. It is assumed that this high enol content prevails in all the other cases.

There are little published data on the effect on the absorption spectra of fluorine substitutions in the diketone molecule. The absorption spectra for trifluoroacetylacetone (Fig. 1a) has the same general shape as that of acetylacetone, but the  $\lambda_{\max}$  has been shifted from 272 m $\mu$  to 283 m $\mu$  (Table II) upon the substitution of the trifluoro group for the methyl group. This shift can be accounted for by assuming that the introduction of the electronegative fluorines caused an increase in the contribution of the ionic resonance forms in the excited state thus stabilizing this state and reducing the energy difference between the excited and ground states with a corresponding shift of the absorption maximum to the red. The substitution of a heterocyclic unit for a methyl group in acetylacetone had the same effect as the introduction of the CF<sub>3</sub> group, although the shift to the red was still greater, with the  $\lambda_{\max}$  for 2-thenoylacetone (Fig. 2a) and 2-furoylacetone (Fig. 1b) appearing at 317 m $\mu$  and 311 m $\mu$  respectively. This shift probably is related to an increase in the length of the conjugated system as a whole, as compared to the enol resonance alone in the simple acetylacetone. In addition, the absorption spectra of these two compounds show a shoulder at wave lengths shorter than the  $\lambda_{\max}$  which is probably related to the heterocyclic component itself. The substitution of a trifluoromethyl group for the remaining methyl group in the diketones containing a heterocyclic group complicates the ultraviolet spectra considerably. In each case, a third maximum appears at the long wave length side of the  $\lambda_{\max}$ . The intensity of this third maximum increases from HPTA < HTTA < HFTA, and in this later case, the third maximum had about the same intensity as the second maximum. An explanation of this

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11. J. C. Reid, and M. Calvin, J. Am. Chem. Soc. 73, 2948 (1950).

TABLE II

<u>diketone</u>		<u>ZrK<sub>4</sub></u>		<u>HfK<sub>4</sub></u>							
		cyclohexane	benzene	cyclohexane	benzene						
$\lambda_{\max}$	$\epsilon_{\max}(4 \times 10^{-3})$	$\lambda_{\max}$	$\epsilon_{\max}(4 \times 10^{-3})$	$\lambda_{\max}$	$\epsilon_{\max}(4 \times 10^{-3})$						
HCCA 272	34.3	274	33.1	272	33.6	275	34.9	272	32.5	274	27.4
HCTA 283	24.1	285	33.0	287	25.4	290	30.7	286	28.8	289	30.6
HFCA 311	59.2	317	66.8	311	55.3	317	83.5	311	58.1	317	70.5
HFTA 320	58.8	329	64.0	340	58.8	351	99.9	338	58.4	348	92.7
HPTA 327	75.6	333	68.4	348	74.8	358	77.9	344	68.2	356	84.4
HTCA 317	65.2	321	61.6	317	65.2	321	59.9	317	66.9	321	50.9
HTTA 317	59.2	326	50.1	341	56.7	348	64.0	340	57.6	345	64.0

complication in spectra is lacking at the moment. If it is due to the presence of another molecular species, it is not known what this species might be. It is interesting to note that the  $\lambda_{\max}$  for the HTCA and HTTA are both 317 m $\mu$ , while the  $\lambda_{\max}$  for the HFCA is 311 m $\mu$  and for the HFTA it is 320 m $\mu$ , assuming that it is the second maximum in this case which is related to the enol form of the molecule. The assignment of the second maximum to the enol ring was made on the basis of the following facts: the second maximum has molar extinction coefficient approximately four times the  $\epsilon$  of the diketone itself, which would follow from the composition of the chelate  $MK_4$ ; and secondly, by analogy to HCTA and its derivatives, it is assumed that a shift of the  $\lambda_{\max}$  to the red occurs upon chelation. Since in the case of HFTA, the two maxima are of about the same intensity, the last factor cited was the determining one here.

Ultraviolet absorption spectra-chelates.- It had been found early in the study of metal chelate compounds, that the spectra of the metal derivatives of acetylacetone differed little from the spectra of the diketone itself<sup>8,12</sup> except in the intensity of the  $\lambda_{\max}$  which was however, proportional to the number of acetylacetone residues around the metal atom. This is indeed found to be the case for the zirconium and hafnium derivatives of acetylacetone (Fig. 1a), 2-furoylacetone (Fig. 1b), and 2-thenoylacetone (Fig. 2a). However, the metal derivatives of trifluoroacetylacetone had  $\lambda_{\max}$  values which were definitely shifted to longer wave lengths. (Table II). In addition to these shifts, upon chelation another pronounced difference was observed between the spectra of HTTA, HFTA, and their metal derivatives in that the metal derivatives showed only one major maximum instead of two as with the

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12. G. T. Morgan, and H. W. Moss, J. Chem. Soc. 105, 189 (1914).

free diketones. The HPTA metal derivatives still showed the shoulder to the right of the  $\lambda_{\max}$  but at considerably higher intensity than in the diketone itself. It should be noted that the pyrrolyl derivative behaved differently than the other heterocyclic compounds in almost all the properties examined.

In these cases, where the  $\lambda_{\max}$  is shifted to longer wave lengths upon chelate formation, the  $\lambda_{\max}$  for the zirconium is always shifted slightly further to the red than the  $\lambda_{\max}$  for the hafnium compound, thus making the zirconium enol ring slightly more stable than the corresponding hafnium structure.

It appears, then, that in each case of a fluorinated diketone, the values of the  $\lambda_{\max}$  of the metal derivative are shifted to longer wave lengths than the  $\lambda_{\max}$  values for the diketones themselves. It is not easy at the present time to rationalize this fact. It has been postulated that when the metal chelate and chelating agent spectra are alike the bond is ionic, since the chelate part of the molecule is in the same condition as in the diketone itself.<sup>13</sup> It would appear that in the diketones containing the trifluoro-group the bond should be more ionic in character than in those not containing the trifluoro group, since the presence of the electronegative  $\text{CF}_3$  group would have a restrictive effect on the participation of the oxygen donor electrons in the bonding. Thus, greater participation of the donor electrons in the metal's orbitals cannot be used to rationalize this shift to the red<sup>13</sup>. In fact, one would expect the donor electrons of acetylacetone to participate to a greater extent in the metal chelate bond formation, than the donor electrons of trifluoroacetylacetone, yet in this case, and in the case of the other

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13. A. E. Martell and M. Calvin, "Chemistry of the Metal Chelate Compounds", Prentice-Hall, New York, N. Y., 1952, p. 220-221.

nonfluorinated diketones no shift to the red is observed upon chelation.

It has also been suggested<sup>13</sup> that the shift to the red upon chelation is due to the participation of metal electrons in double bond formation with the oxygens of the diketone. However, in the case of zirconium and hafnium there are no metal electrons available to do this, and therefore some other process must be operative. This leads us to use the same explanation for the red shift in the metal chelate spectra as was used to explain the red shift of the HCTA spectra, namely the stabilization of the excited state by the increased contribution of ionic resonance forms, but there seems no logical reason for assuming that this is the case. The only other alternative is to assume that the ground state of the metal chelate in these trifluoro derivatives is actually higher than the ground state of the metal derivatives of the non-fluoro derivatives, then with similar energy levels for the first excited states the metal derivatives would show this shift to the red.

It is concluded from these data on molecular volumes and ultraviolet absorption spectra that it is difficult to fit the observed facts in terms of present day interpretations of similar data. Only for the derivatives of acetylacetone, in which case identical molecular volumes are obtained and the spectra of chelates and diketones are the same, do the facts fit.

#### Experimental

Materials.- Eastman Kodak acetylacetone was redistilled with the fractions coming over at 139° and 746 mm. used. The 2-furoylacetone and 2-thienoylacetone was obtained from Professor R.A. Levine of the University of Pittsburgh and redistilled in vacuo. The other  $\beta$ -diketones were synthesized in

this laboratory according to published procedures<sup>10,14,15</sup> and purified by vacuum distillation.

Cyclohexane used as a solvent in the ultraviolet absorption spectra measurements was purified by passing it through a silica gel column<sup>16</sup> and by distillation.

The zirconium and hafnium oxychlorides were recrystallized from aqueous 9 N HCl solution. The zirconium contained only 0.04% hafnium, and the hafnium 0.75% zirconium. All the molecular weight data were corrected for these impurities.

Preparation of the chelate compounds.- Two general methods of preparation were used, 1) the direct addition of the diketone to the solution of the metal, 2) a two phase extraction procedure.

In the preparation of the derivatives of HCCA, HCTA, HFCA, a twenty-five per cent excess of the theoretical amount of the chelating agent was added dropwise with rapid stirring to a cold 0.1 M solution of the metal oxychloride. The pH of the reaction mixture was maintained at all times at 1.45 by the addition of a dilute sodium carbonate solution. The precipitate normally formed immediately upon the addition of the diketone. The hafnium HCCA product did not precipitate immediately but began to crystallize after several hours at 0°. The conditions used for the preparation of the HTCA derivatives differed slightly since this diketone is a solid at room temperature, and is very insoluble in water. The reaction is best carried out by warming the reaction mixture to 40° at which temperature the HTCA is liquid. The resulting

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14. A. Henne, M. Newman, L. L. Quill and R. Staniforth, J. Am. Chem. Soc. 69, 1819 (1947).

15. E. M. Larsen and G. Terry, *ibid.* 73, 500 (1951).

16. M. M. Graff, R. T. O'Connor and E. L. Skau, Ind. Eng. Chem. Anal. Ed. 16, 556 (1944).

reaction mixture was a colloidal dispersion which was coagulated by the addition of a few drops of 0.01 M HCl.

In the two phase extraction method used for HTTA, HFTA, and HPTA derivatives, the aqueous solution was 0.1 M in HCl, and 0.01 M in  $M^{+4}$ ; the diketone concentration of the benzene solution was ten per cent in excess of the theoretical requirement suitably corrected for the distribution of the diketone in the aqueous phase<sup>2</sup>. After shaking for twenty-four hours the phases were separated, the aqueous phase shaken with fresh benzene, the benzene phases combined and evaporated in a stream of filtered air at a slightly elevated temperature. The HFTA derivatives were quite insoluble in benzene as well as the aqueous phase and separated out as a large globule which was recovered by filtration.

The crude chelate product produced by either method was extracted repeatedly with warm petroleum ether (60-68° fraction) in which the unreacted diketone was soluble and the chelates were relatively insoluble. The chelate was then dissolved in sufficient benzene to give complete solution, and the chelate reprecipitated by the addition of petroleum ether. The metal chelates were finally recrystallized from hot petroleum ether solution. The products were dried and the last traces of solvent were removed in vacuo at 70°. The yields are given in Table III. The metal chelates of HCCA and HCTA were white crystalline compounds, while the others were creamy colored powders, with the HPTA derivatives being more yellow than the rest.

Analyses.- All the chelates were analyzed for their metal content. The samples in platinum crucibles were placed in crushed ice, a few milliliters of water added and red fuming nitric acid added dropwise until a clear solution was obtained. This was evaporated to near dryness on a steam bath, a few drops of concentrated  $H_2SO_4$  along with a few ml. of concentrated nitric



acid were added to the residue, again evaporated to near dryness, and the sulfuric acid fumed off. The charred samples were then ignited to constant weight over a Meker burner. The data in Table III represent average values of at least duplicate samples. The hafnium was assumed to have the corrected atomic weight of 177.94.

Melting Points.- (Table III) The melting points were determined in a capillary melting point tube with a thermometer calibrated to an accuracy of  $0.5^{\circ}$ .

Densities and Molecular Volumes.- The densities of all the chelates were determined by the standard pycnometric method in which the volume of immersion liquid displaced by a known weight of a solid sample is measured. The immersion liquid here was boiled distilled water or petroleum ether ( $100-140^{\circ}$ ) saturated with the chelate. The HCCA derivatives were all run in petroleum ether. The measurements were all made at  $25 \pm 0.02^{\circ}$  and the samples were degassed in a vacuum desiccator before weighing in the immersion liquid. The results along with the calculated molecular volumes are given in Table I. The molecular volume is simply the molecular weight of the compound divided by the density.

Absorption Spectra.- The ultraviolet absorption spectra were determined for each of the  $\beta$ -diketones and their corresponding zirconium and hafnium chelate compounds both in purified dry cyclohexane and in dry benzene. The data for the benzene solutions were determined using a Beckman DU Quartz Spectrophotometer, and the data for the cyclohexane solutions were obtained on a Cary Model 11 recording quartz spectrophotometer. One cm. cells were used in each case. Several of the solutions were run on both instruments with essentially identical results. The solutions were all about  $10^{-5}$  M and were always run within a few hours of preparation. The diketones used were freshly distilled.

TABLE III

<u>Compound</u>	<u>% Yield</u>	<u>Calcd.</u>	<u>Found</u>	<u>Melting Point °C.</u>
Zr(CCA) <sub>4</sub>	75	18.7	18.9	190-3°
Hf(CCA) <sub>4</sub>	76	31.0	31.2	188-90°
Zr(CTA) <sub>4</sub>	97	13.0	13.2	128-30°
Hf(CTA) <sub>4</sub>	80	22.5	22.3	125-8°
Zr(FCA) <sub>4</sub>	81	13.1	13.1	198-01°
Hf(FCA) <sub>4</sub>	80	22.7	22.6	200-02°
Zr(FTA) <sub>4</sub>	95	10.0	10.0	199-01°
Hf(FTA) <sub>4</sub>	82	17.8	17.4	195-7°
Zr(PTA) <sub>4</sub>	93	10.1	10.0	184-5°
Hf(PTA) <sub>4</sub>	83	17.9	17.8	185-6°
Zr(TCA) <sub>4</sub>	81	12.0	11.95	244-5°
Hf(TCA) <sub>4</sub>	82	21.0	21.1	239-42°
Zr(TTA) <sub>4</sub>	80	9.3	9.3	225-6°
Hf(TTA) <sub>4</sub>	96	16.7	16.6	220-23°

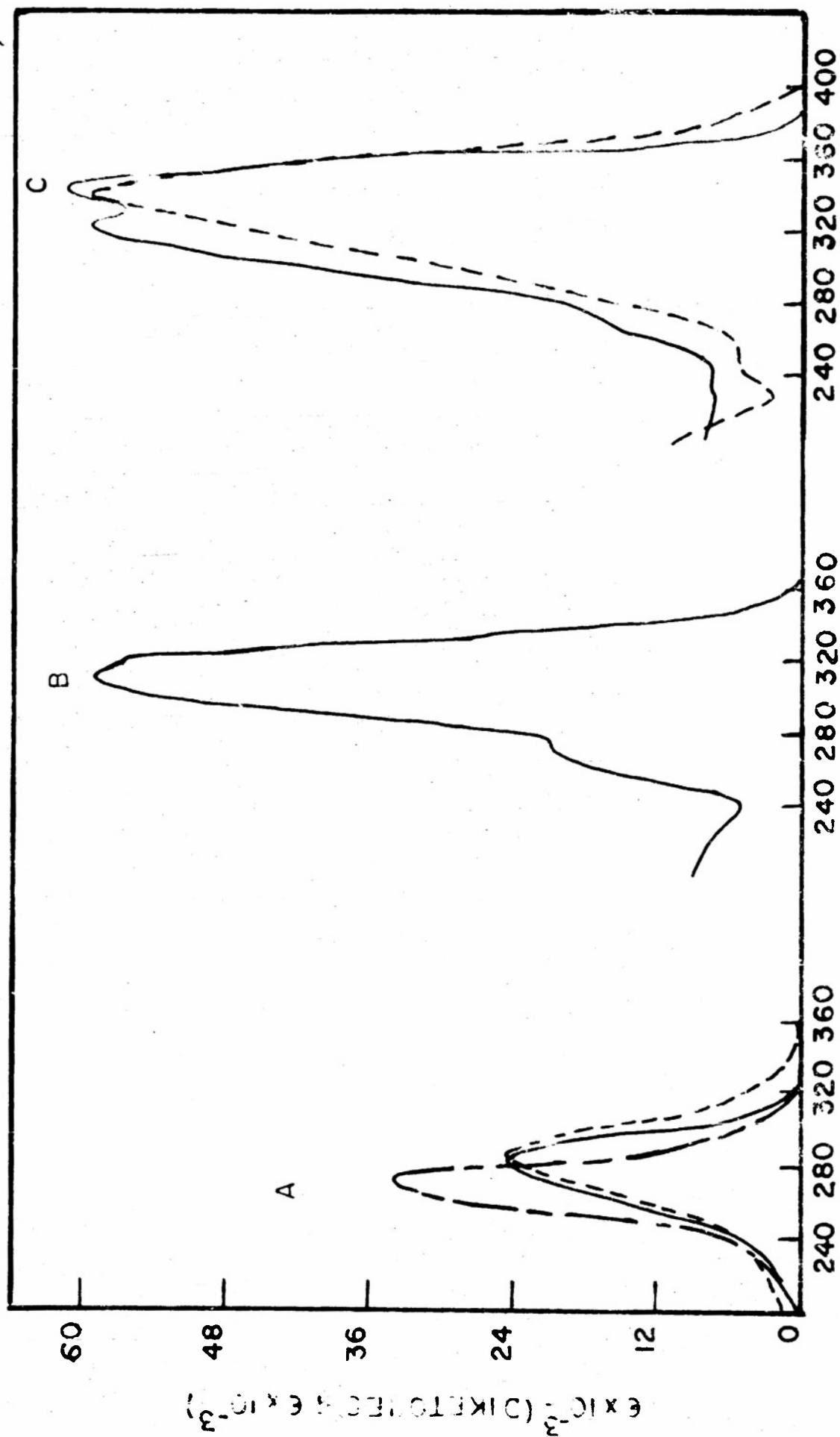
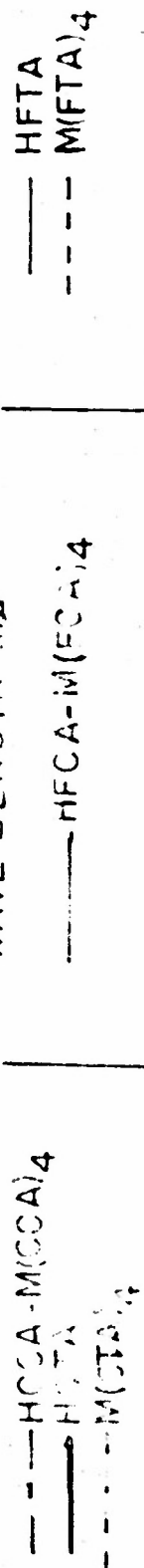


FIG.1

WAVE LENGTH nm



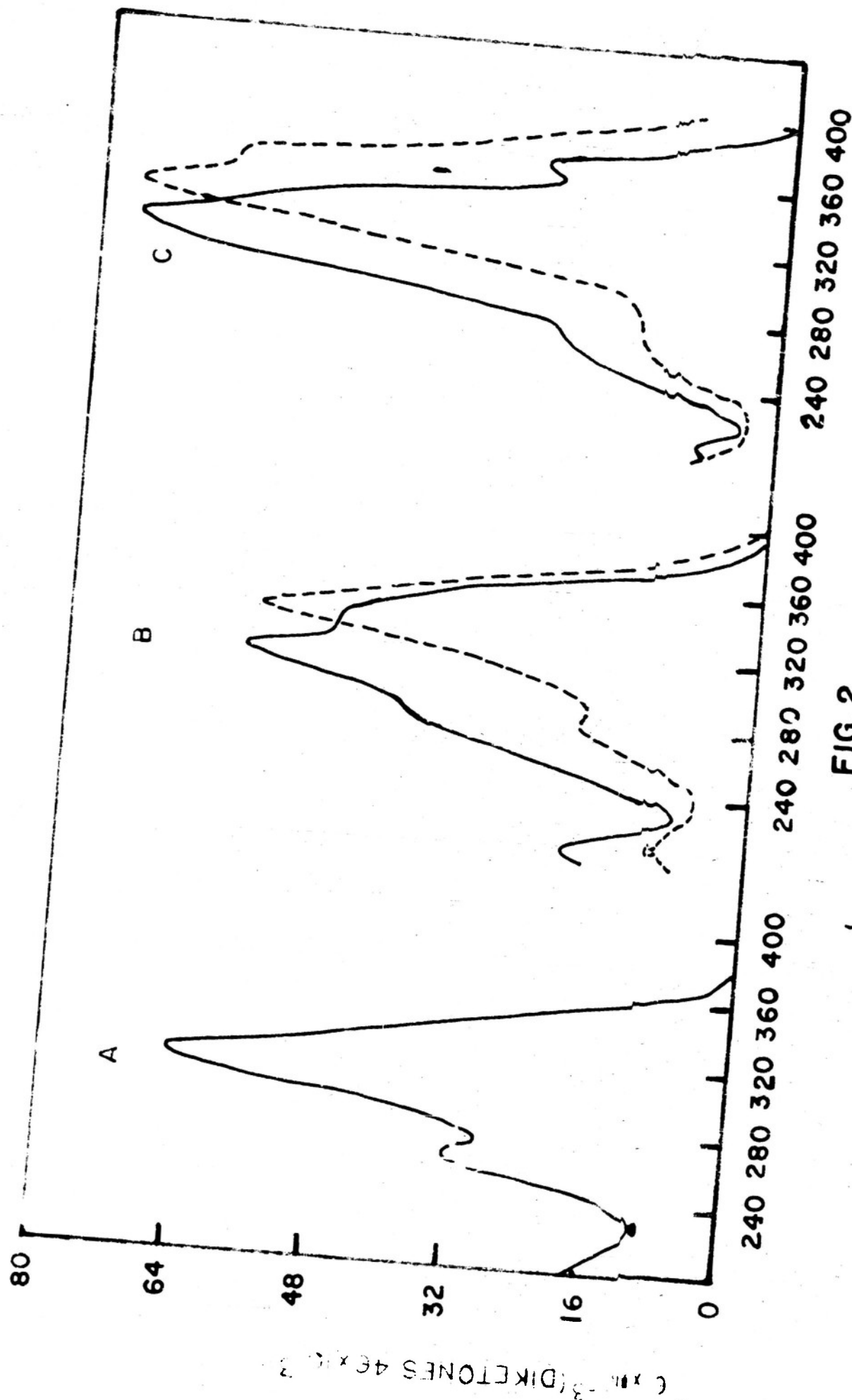


FIG. 2

WAVE LENGTH mμ

— HTTA

--- M(TTA)<sub>4</sub>

— HTCA-M(TCA)<sub>4</sub>

— HPTA

--- M(PTA)<sub>4</sub>